

CITY COUNCIL DIRECTION *on* DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

| DOWNTOWN BUILDINGS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS | CITY COUNCIL DIRECTION ON MAY 24, 2015 |
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| 1. DOCUMENTATION | |
| 1. A. Revise the Design Guidelines. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 1. B. Revise and update existing planning documents to ensure consistent terminology throughout. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 1. C. Discard obsolete documents and keep all documents current. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 1. D. Make zoning code the single source for explicit, measurable requirements. Don't duplicate requirements across multiple documents. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 1. E. Make more use of illustrations and diagrams in all documents. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 1. F. Put all documents online and make them interactive with links to each other and relevant city codes | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 2. ACCESS AND TRANSPARENCY | |
| 2. A. Revise the existing planning page on the city website to include all steps in the process and provide links to relevant documents ... | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 2. B. As a long term goal, provide the means for developers to make submissions online. | Proceed with implementation.* |

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| 3. PROCESS/PROCEDURES | |
| 3. A. Provide detailed checklists for developers at every step of the planning process for consistency and accountability. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 3. B. Attach the completed Design Guidelines checklist to each staff report. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 3. C. Create a standard template for staff reports | |
| 3. D. Require an early stage design review for new commercial and multi-family projects and major remodels in the downtown triangle. This design review to be done with consulting professional having specific expertise, paid for by the developer. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 3. E. To ensure that Council-approved DBC recommendations are implemented in a timely way, create a workplan with measurable milestones for each to track progress. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 4. HEIGHT, BULK, and MASS | |
| 4. A. Amend the height limits for the CD and CD/R3 zones so that commercial and mixed-use structures do not exceed 30 feet in height and entirely residential projects do not exceed 35 feet in height. | Proceed with implementing the recommendation with latitude for staff to refine it with minor modifications based on further analysis and move towards Planning and Transportation Commission review. |
| 4. B. Adopt an ordinance establishing a temporary moratorium on new construction in the CD and CD/R3 zones that does not meet the height limits recommended above, pending completion of the process needed to act on and implement the zoning changes. | This recommendation was not adopted. |
| 5. HEIGHT EXCEPTIONS PER 14.66.240 | |
| 5. A. Amend 14.66.240 (A) and (E) to group structures that are related to building | Proceed with implementation.* |

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| design, equipment or mechanical screening separate from other structures (e.g. flag pole and antennae). Make the maximum height for such structures 8 feet instead of 15. | |
| 5. B. Remove language in guidelines and plans that encourage towers (Downtown Design Plan p. 11, 22, 35). Direct staff to prepare and add definition for “penthouse” and “tower” to the general definitions at 14.02.070. Specify that penthouse is not a habitable or commercial space but is intended to provide an architecturally pleasing cover to stairwells, elevator equipment, etc. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 6. ARTICULATION | |
| 6. A. Amend Design Control to require articulation for every building over 50 feet wide and require changes of plane in the horizontal and vertical aspects. | Staff to review Committee recommendation and develop plan for implementation, enlisting board and commission input or approvals as appropriate. No Boxy Buildings is the ultimate goal. |
| 6. B. Through development requirements and guidelines, encourage variation in building-entrance configuration <u>and other aspects</u> of the front of the building, upper levels, and roofline, to avoid a “tunnel” that would result from having all buildings constructed to the minimum setback. Instruct Staff and the PTC to encourage creative articulations at street level rather than building to the minimum setback. | Staff to review Committee recommendation and develop recommendation for implementation, enlisting board and commission input or approvals as appropriate. No Boxy Buildings is the ultimate goal. |
| 7. SIDEWALKS | |
| 7. A. Require minimum sidewalk width of 6 feet that is generally clear of all obstructions such as signage and utility poles (consistent with streetscape plan previously implemented for the north end of First Street). | Staff to review Committee recommendation and develop plan for implementation if feasible, enlisting board and commission input or approvals as appropriate. (See Item 8H regarding First Street) |
| 7. B. Where sidewalks are not more than 6 feet wide, prohibit walls or any obstructing hedges or similar plantings within the first two feet of setback. This is advisable because pedestrians avoid the 24 inch area next to a wall of any height | |

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| and also avoid 18 inches near the curb. This effectively leaves only 18 inches of a 5-foot wide sidewalk for walking. (See <i>EXHIBIT 7.2.</i>) | |
| 7. C. Where code currently requires side or rear setback of 2 feet where property adjoins public right of way, change language to require setback of at least 2 feet and as much as 5 feet if needed to create safe pedestrian walkways, supplemented with suitable landscaping. | Staff to review Committee recommendation and develop plan for implementation if feasible, enlisting board and commission input or approvals as appropriate. (See Item 8H regarding First Street) |
| 8. LANDSCAPE | |
| 8. A. When full landscape plans are submitted for city review, city staff should convene a small group composed of a landscape designer or architect, arborist (if plan involves trees), and city maintenance employee with plant-care expertise to review the plan and provide input to the planning staff and subsequent reviewers. | Staff to review and incorporate the recommendations in to procedures and a process that requires appropriate landscaping for projects. |
| 8. B. Task the city arborist to develop a list of recommended trees and minimum sizes for each. | |
| 8. C. Require that plans for care and maintenance be submitted along with landscaping plans. | |
| 8. D. Implement companion plantings that will contribute to the desired Downtown Guideline that recommends an appearance of abundant and substantial landscaping. | |
| 8. E. Enforce current Design Guidelines (Section 3.1.2a) that recommend “use [of] abundant landscaping” for wall covering and store front landscaping. Provide “now” and “later” (+5 years) landscaping photos plus photos of desirable landscapes and those that are unattractive. | |

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| 8. F. Increase landscaping in the front of buildings. (Also refer to Recommendation 7B.). | |
| 8. G. Create a list of suggested plants for the developer to consider when creating the landscape design. The suggested list should be developed by the city arborist and gardening staff, with experience derived from caring for plantings in downtown. | Staff to review and incorporate the recommendations in to procedures and a process that requires appropriate landscaping for projects. |
| 8. H. Incorporate requirements for amenities and landscaping in the setback and along building fronts in any future streetscape plan for First Street between Main and San Antonio, and encourage additional setbacks for landscaping | Move forward with development of a design for the First Street Improvement Plan. |
| 9. QUALITY OF BUILDING MATERIALS | |
| <p>9. A. Modify the required finding as follows:</p> <p><u>“Exterior materials and finishes convey high quality, integrity, permanence and durability, and materials are used effectively to define building elements such as base, boy, parapets, bays, arcades and structural elements. Materials, finishes, and colors used serve to reduce perceived appearance of height, bulk and mass, and are harmonious with other structures in the immediate area and in the downtown village.”</u></p> | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 9. B. Amend “Submittal Requirements Commercial or Multi-Family Design Review, item 7 Color Renderings and 3D Model” and/or the Design Guidelines to require that proposed buildings in the Downtown district be modeled using 3D and other forms of digital simulation that depict the Materials Board and allow for closer consideration of proposed colors and textures of exterior finishes in context. | Proceed with implementation – but tie to modeling and implement if the capability of the software allows for accurate representation of the materials. |
| 9. C. Require submission of a physical Materials Board of samples of colors, materials and finishes in the submission requirement checklist. | Proceed with implementation.* |

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| 9. D. Require submission of larger scale samples and/or examples of uses of the materials and finishes in prior projects for materials and finishes not in common use in the Downtown district. | Proceed with implementation.* |
| 10. SHADOWS | |
| 10. A. As neither staff nor PTC have such expertise, the city should engage a specialist with knowledge of standard practice for evaluating daylight/shadow impacts in a commercial setting. Scope of work should include identifying the tools and recommending a process for evaluating the impact of proposed developments on the streetscape, sidewalks, adjacent/opposing buildings, and landscape plans. Create a process for including such evaluation in the decision making process. | Include in the development and evaluation of scenarios during the Downtown Vision process. |
| 10. B. Generalized modeling should be done of the light and shadows for the downtown area as currently built and at full build-out under specified zoning. (See Section 12, Physical and Digital Models.) | |
| 10. C. If warranted based on the full-city model, establish light plane guidelines for commercial development. [Note: There are light plane guidelines in place for residential buildings.] | |
| 11. VIEWS | |
| 11. A. Make preservation of existing views of the surrounding hills and downtown tree canopy a part of the Design Review process for buildings in the Downtown triangle. | Include in the development and evaluation of scenarios during the Downtown Vision process. |
| 11. B. Specify views to protect, with emphasis on the foothills as seen from Southbound San Antonio Road and treescape from State and Main. Document | |

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| the selected views in the design guidelines and include photographs. Specify how submittals should address the issue of views. | |
| 12. DIGITAL AND PHYSICAL MODELS | |
| 12. A. Undertake a project to identify 3D modeling software. | Proceed with identification of appropriate software for developing a 3D model of the Downtown. Intent of the 3D model is as a tool to evaluate proposed projects in the Downtown and evaluate scenarios based on various site development standards, such as height limits. |
| 12. B. Develop digital and physical model of the downtown triangle using parameters specified by Council. | |
| 12. C. Require developers to provide data necessary to model their proposal to the digital system described above. | Proceed with development of a physical model that can be modified to depict different options for building heights and site development standards. |

*Direction to proceed with caveat that staff bring back questions or concerns that come up during implementation and that the first step in the process will be the development of a work plan and update schedule for implementation of the recommendations